

Message Text

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ACTION OES-07

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FM AMEMBASSY SEOUL
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1547
INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

C O N F I D E N T I A L SEOUL 4890

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: N/A
SUBJECT: POSSIBLE ROK INTEREST IN PROCUREMENT OF A HEAVY WATER
PRODUCTION PLANT

1. WE HAVE HAD SEVERAL REPORTS RECENTLY OF KOREAN INTEREST
IN PROCURING A HEAVY WATER PRODUCTION PLANT FROM KRAFTWERK
UNION (FRG) AS PART OF A PACKAGE DEAL WHICH WOULD ALSO
INCLUDE THREE OR FOUR UNITS OF NATURAL URANIUM FUELED
PRESSURIZED HEAVY WATER MODERATED AND COOLED POWER REACTORS.
IT IS OUR UNDERSTANDING THAT KRAFTWERK UNION'S FREDER
RECENTLY VISITED THE ROK. HE STATED THAT HE HAD NO DIFFICULTY
IN CONSTRUCTING THE TYPE OF FACILITY DISCUSSED BUT THAT HE
WOULD HAVE TO SOUND OUT GERMANY GOVERNMENT TO DETERMINE POSSIBLE
POLITICAL IMPLICATIONS. THE ROK CURRENTLY HAS ONE MAN
IN GERMANY FOR DISCUSSIONS WITH KRAFTWERK UNION AND IS
PLANNING TO SEND A TECHNICAL TEAM IN THE NEAR FUTURE.

2. AS EMBASSY UNDERSTANDS IT, KRAFTWERK UNION HAS THE
TECHNOLOGY FOR BOTH THE HEAVY WATER PRESSURIZED POWER
REACTOR AND FOR A HEAVY WATER PRODUCTION PLANT BUT IN
FACT WITH THE EXCEPTION OF ONE POWER UNIT IN ARGENTINA
HAS PUT NEITHER OF THESE INTO COMMERCIAL OPERATION
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AND DOES NOT PUSH SALES OF SUCH UNITS. IN MAKING THIS
REQUEST, THE ROK MAY BE ATTEMPTING THE FOLLOWING:

A) TO OBTAIN FINANCIAL COST COMPARISONS BETWEEN THE
HEAVY WATER PRESSURIZED POWER REACTOR AND THE LIGHT
WATER REACTORS AND CANDU REACTOR CURRENTLY UNDER CONTRACT;

B) TESTING THE WILLINGNESS OF FOREIGN MANUFACTURERS
TO GO OUTSIDE THE LONDON SUPPLIERS' GROUP GUIDELINES IN
SUPPLYING HEAVY WATER PRODUCTION PLANTS;

C) TESTING THE WILLINGNESS OF KRAFTWERK UNION TO
SUPPLY TECHNOLOGY.

3. COMMENT: THE EMBASSY UNDERSTANDS THAT THE APPROACH
TO KRAFTWERK UNION DID NOT ORIGINATE WITH KECO BUT WAS
IN FACT DIRECTED FROM OUTSIDE THAT ORGANIZATION. WE
OF COURSE ARE CONCERNED THAT A HEAVY WATER PRODUCTION
FACILITY WOULD NOT BE IN KEEPING WITH THE NON-PROLIFERATION
GUIDELINES AND WOULD BE AN ACTION THAT THE USG NOT ONLY
WOULD NOT SUPPORT BUT WOULD ACTIVELY OPPOSE. WE BELIEVE
THEREFORE THAT AN EFFORT SHOULD BE MADE AT THIS POINT
TO HEAD OFF FURTHER DISCUSSIONS BETWEEN KRAFTWERK UNION
AND KECO IN WHICH THE POSSIBILITY OF SUPPLYING A HEAVY
WATER PRODUCTION FACILITY FOR KOREA IS AN ELEMENT OF
THE PACKAGE.

4. ACTION REQUESTED: IF THE DEPARTMENT AGREES, IT IS
REQUESTED THAT IT INSTRUCT EMBASSY BONN TO MAKE OUR
CONCERNS KNOWN TO THE APPROPRIATE OFFICIALS IN THE FRG
IN THE HOPE OF DEFUSING THIS POTENTIAL PROBLEM IN ITS
EARLY STAGES. AMBASSADOR HAS ALREADY WARNED MINISTER OF
ENERGY CHONG AND WE WILL SEND UP FURTHER WARNING SIGNALS.
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